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Draft/Yarmolinsky/5/29/62

REMARKS OF  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT S. McNAMARA  
AT THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

I am glad to be home, and I am particularly glad to be here for a university occasion. For this University gives meaning and focus to life in Ann Arbor -- even for those who are not privileged to be associated with it directly -- as the academic community serves to clarify the objectives and focus the energies of the Free World.

President Kennedy aptly described the function of the university when he said: "The pursuit of knowledge . . . rests . . . on the idea of a world based on diversity, self-determination, and freedom. And that is the kind of world to which we Americans, as a nation, are committed by the principles upon which the great Republic was founded. As men conduct the pursuit of knowledge, they create a world which freely unites national diversity and international partnership."

Commencement orators like to point to the fact that what we celebrate here is not an end, but a beginning. I prefer to take my text from another aspect of the occasion which we are observing today.

The ancient formula for the award of academic degrees admits you into a long-established community, whether it be the fellowship of educated men, or the ancient and honorable company of scholars, of which you are the newest members. This community embodies the highest ideals of the Free World. Its membership includes people of every race, color, and creed. They share a

common language, the language of ideas. They are dedicated to the fullest possible development of the individual human potential. And the only requirement for admission is a demonstrated capacity for and commitment to the use of one's powers of reason.

What I want to talk to you about here today are some of the concrete problems of maintaining a free community in the world today. I want to talk to you particularly about the problems of the community that binds together the United States and the countries of Western Europe.

Europe is the source of many of our traditions. One of these is the tradition of the university, which we can trace back to the groves of Academe, on the same site where only a few weeks ago the foreign ministers and ministers of defense of the European nations and the United States met to discuss their common problems.

I need scarcely remind you that Europe is one of the great sources of the American idea of freedom, and that it was the European philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who shaped the thinking of our own founding fathers. For all of us, Europe has been our teacher since we first learned to read.

One of the most impressive lessons that Europe has provided us recently is the lesson of her revival from the ashes of destruction at the end of the Second World War. The national economies of Europe were almost at standstill 15 years ago. Their capital plant was largely destroyed, either directly by bombing, or indirectly by years of neglect and patchwork repair. The people

were exhausted by six years of war, and a large part of the most productive age group had been wiped out. But only in the last 10 years, they have managed to increase the production of steel and electricity by over 130 per cent each, and the production of automobiles by over 330 per cent.

The pump-priming help of the American Marshall Plan came at a

crucial time in the process of European recovery. But the genius of the plan, as envisaged by men like George Marshall and Harry Truman, was to help the Europeans help themselves.

At the same time that the nations of Europe were rebuilding at home, they were going through the difficult and often painful process of reestablishing their relationships with the peoples of Africa and Asia, no longer as master and servant, but as members of the human race, all equally entitled to develop their individual capabilities. This process of change is by no means complete, and there are still difficult times ahead. But the joint achievement of Europe and its former colonies in revising their relations with each other is at least as impressive as the economic recovery of Europe itself.

What may be the greatest post-war European achievement is still in the making. The nations of Europe have begun to level the outmoded barriers that confined their individual economies within national boundaries. As Jean Monnet, the principal architect of the new Europe puts it, "An entirely new situation has been created in the world, simply by adding six countries together. It's not an addition; in fact, it's a multiplication. You multiply the capabilities of the countries you unite. A dynamic process is beginning that is changing the

face of Europe and the role of Europeans in the world."

The making of Europe has only begun, and indeed it is perhaps at its most critical stage. But we should not overlook the fact that French coal and German steel now move freely across the continent, and that German refrigerators and Italian shoes are sold without tariff in Belgian department stores.

All of these achievements have been accomplished under pressure from titanic forces which make a rational organization of human society increasingly difficult both for the Europeans and for ourselves. Let me mention some of these forces.

We are confronted with a population explosion resulting from our own success in coping with disease and abnormalities, and by now threatening to double the earth's population by the end of this century. Unless we can control this explosion in the poor and resource-limited countries, the effects of economic growth may be cancelled out by population growth, and the unsatisfied rising expectations, particularly in the younger nations, may upset the delicate balance of political stability.

We are borne along by the accelerating pace of science and technology. In this country alone, new inventions are patented at a rate of 50,000 a year. Our population of scientists and engineers has increased by more than 40 per cent in the last eight years. In fact, 80 per cent of all scientists and engineers who have lived throughout history are alive today.

We are faced with a geometric increase in the number of national states. Since World War II, 35 new nations have been formed. Each new nation expresses the natural desire for self-determination and self-government. But their numbers complicate the problem of international diplomacy at the same time that military and economic developments increase our inter-dependence. Every nation is more and more directly affected by the internal situation of its neighbors, and the globe has shrunk to the point where we are all each other's neighbors.

Lastly, we live in the shadow of the Sino-Soviet drive for world domination. It may be worthwhile to catalog briefly the component forces that make the Sino-Soviet power drive as strong as it is today.

First is the all-encompassing ideology of world communism which, at the same time, offers the idealist a concept of professed service to humanity, while it offers the cynic a theoretical justification as well as practical demonstrations of the most authoritarian methods.

Second, is the Machiavellian method developed to grasp and seize political power.

Third  
And last is the concrete example of extraordinary economic progress, even though obtained at a frightening human cost.

In the face of all these challenges, the ultimate objective of the free world is to establish a system of world order, based on the dignity of the individual and dedicated to the free development of each man's capacities.

Finally, there is <sup>the maintenance of</sup> non-nuclear armaments forces far larger than any of her European neighbors, a large and growing capability to launch nuclear strikes against Western Europe and a smaller but significant capability to threaten the United States.

The members of the North Atlantic community -- the Europeans and ourselves -- bear a special responsibility to help achieve this objective. This responsibility derives from the strength of our internal institutions and the wealth of our material resources.

But we cannot hope to move toward our objectives unless we move from strength. Part of that strength must be military strength, enough to assure to the nations of the free world the freedom to choose their own course of development.

We do not agree with all the choices made by our friends around the world, but we defend their right to make their own choices, not dictated from Moscow or Peking. We believe that every human society has a natural tendency toward freedom, and that all free societies are naturally compatible.

The nature and extent of the military power base for the free world needed to meet the entire spectrum of challenges confronting the free world is beyond the capacity of any single nation to provide. Since our own security cannot be separated from the security of the rest of the free world, we necessarily rely on a series of alliances, the most important of which is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

NATO was born in 1949 out of the confrontation with the Soviet Union that ensued from the breakdown in relations between the former wartime allies. The Soviet Union had absorbed the states of eastern Europe into its own political framework, most dramatically with the Czechoslovakian coup of 1948. It had been fomenting insurrection in Greece, menacing Turkey, and encouraging

the Communist parties in Western Europe to seize power in the wake of postwar economic disorder. The sharpest threat to Europe came with the first Berlin Crisis when the Russians attempted to blockade the western sectors of the city. Our response to these evidences of aggression was immediate and positive. President Truman ordered an airlift for the isolated population of West Berlin which in time denied the Soviets their prize. The Marshall Plan, then in full swing, was assisting the economic recovery of the Western European nations. The Truman Doctrine had brought our weight to bear in Greece and Turkey to prevent the erosion of their independence.

But Western statesmen concluded that it would be necessary to secure the strength and growth of the North Atlantic community with a more permanent arrangement for its defense. The effective defense of Western Europe could not really be accomplished without a commitment of the United States to that defense for the long term. We made this commitment without hesitation. Arthur Vandenberg, one of the chief architects of NATO, expressed the rationale of the organization in the Senate debate preceding passage of the treaty, "NATO is not built to stop a war after it starts -- although its potentialities in this regard are infinite. It is built to stop wars before they start... I...urge the Senate that this is the logical evolution of one of our greatest American idioms, 'united we stand, divided we fall.'"

The North Atlantic alliance is a unique alignment of governments. The provision for the common defense of the members has led to a remarkable degree of military collaboration and diplomatic consultation for a peacetime

coalition. The growth of the alliance organization has accelerated as the task of defending the treaty area has increased in scope, size and complexity. NATO has had its stresses and strains, but it has weathered them all.

Today, NATO is involved in a number of controversies, which must be resolved by achieving a consensus within the organization in order to preserve its strength and unity. Because these controversies grow out of differing views on the place of nuclear weapons in military strategy, I think it is worthwhile to expose the U.S. views on these issues, as we have presented them to our allies.

The central military issue facing NATO is our nuclear strategy. Nuclear technology has revolutionized warfare over the past seventeen years. The unprecedented destructiveness of these arms has radically changed ways of thinking about conflict among nations. It has properly focused great attention and efforts by the Alliance on the prevention of conflict. Nevertheless, the U.S. has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible basic military strategy in general nuclear war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. That is to say, our principal military objectives, in the event of a nuclear war stemming from a major attack on the Alliance, should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces, while attempting to preserve the fabric, as well as the integrity of allied society. Specifically, a strategy which targets nuclear forces only against cities or a mixture of civil and military targets has serious limitations, both for the purpose of deterrence and for the conduct of general nuclear war.

In our best judgment, destroying enemy forces while preserving our own societies is -- within the limits inherent in the great power of nuclear weapons -- a not wholly unattainable military objective.

Even if very substantial exchanges of nuclear weapons were to occur, the damage suffered by the belligerents would vary over wide ranges, depending upon the targets that are hit. If both sides were to confine their attacks to important military targets, damage, while high, would nevertheless be significantly lower than if urban-industrial areas were also attacked. The existence of civil defenses also could have a significant impact on the number of deaths, especially if only military targets are attacked so that the principal danger to most civilians is from fallout.] As an example, our studies of a hypothetical general nuclear war occurring in 1966 show that, with the conflict starting under one particular set of circumstances, and with the Soviets confining their attacks to military targets, the United States under present civil defense plans might suffer 25 million deaths and Europe might suffer somewhat fewer. On the other hand, were the Soviets to attack urban-industrial as well as military targets, the United States might incur 75 million deaths and Europe would have to face the prospects of losing 115 million people. While both sets of figures make grim reading, the first set is preferable to the second. There are others like them.

In the light of these findings the United States has developed its plans in order to permit a variety of strategic choices. We have also instituted a number of programs which will enable the Alliance to engage in a controlled and flexible nuclear response in the event that deterrence should fail. Whether the Soviet Union will do likewise must remain uncertain. All we can say is that the Kremlin has very strong incentives - in large part provided by the nuclear strength of the Alliance - to adopt similar strategies and programs.

[In '66, 25% should be if we hit at midday, 100% if we hit later]

This policy does not imply a spiralling arms race. It requires a very substantial force, but the size of the force is not directly related to the size of opposing force. Further, a large nuclear force is not enough to assure a politically responsible force, or to carry out a policy of controlled and selective response, or to permit us to fulfill all important general war missions. These vital properties depend on the survivability and endurance of the forces and their vital networks of command and control.

If we are to exercise the necessary direction of our forces, a system of command must survive for that purpose. But there is more to command and control than the underground centers, seaborne controls, and airborne operations centers that we possess or are developing.

It is even more important that the Alliance have unity of planning, decision-making, and direction, particularly with respect to responses to enemy actions and especially to retaliatory attacks against him. There must not be competing and conflicting strategies in the conduct of nuclear war. We are convinced that a general nuclear war target system is indivisible, and if nuclear war should occur, our best hope lies in conducting a centrally controlled campaign against all of the enemy's vital nuclear capabilities. We want a greater degree of Alliance participation in formulating nuclear policies and consulting on the appropriate occasions for using these weapons. Beyond this, it is essential that we centralize the decision to use our nuclear weapons to the greatest extent possible. We would all find it intolerable to contemplate having only a part of the strategic force launched in isolation from our main striking power.

We would find it equally intolerable to have one segment of the Alliance force attacking urban-industrial areas while, with the bulk of our forces, we were succeeding in destroying most of the enemies' nuclear capabilities. Such a failure in coordination might lead to the destruction of our hostages - the Soviet cities - just at a time at which our strategy of coercing the Soviets into stopping <sup>his</sup> aggression was on the verge of success. Failure to achieve central control of NATO nuclear forces would mean running a risk of bringing down on us the catastrophe which we must urgently wish to avoid.

*When has this  
coercive  
strategy been  
described?*

*what else?*

In this connection, relatively weak nuclear forces with enemy cities as their targets are not likely to be adequate to perform the function of deterrence. In a world of threats, crises, and possibly even accidents, such a posture appears more likely to deter its owner from standing firm under pressure than to inhibit a potential aggressor. If it is small, and perhaps vulnerable on the ground or in the air, or inaccurate, it enables a major antagonist to take a variety of measures to counter it. Indeed, if a major antagonist came to believe there was a substantial likelihood of it being used independently, this force would be inviting a pre-emptive first strike against it. In the event of war, the use of such a force against the cities of a major nuclear power would be tantamount to suicide, whereas its employment against significant military targets would have a negligible effect on the outcome of the conflict. In short, then, weak nuclear capabilities, operating independently, are expensive, prone to obsolescence, and lacking in credibility as a deterrent.

*Hence, individual NATO countries need US support (that is why  
Soviets are so anxious to split NATO; and why war against national forces*

It is for these reasons that I have laid such stress on unity of

planning, concentration of executive authority, and central direction.

Without them general nuclear war means certain ruin; with them we have a chance of survival as nations. *"But ... this is not satisfactory to*

*only on ..."*

Our massive strategic retaliatory forces are committed to the mission of destroying enemy forces. These enemy forces are located throughout the world and are targeted both on ourselves and on our allies. We are prepared to destroy them wherever they are and whatever their targets. This mission is assigned not only in fulfillment of our treaty commitments but also because the indivisible character of nuclear war compels it. More specifically, the U.S. is as much concerned with that portion of Soviet nuclear striking power that can reach Western Europe as with that portion that also can reach the United States. *Although... Europe remains more vulnerable.*

A major and growing component of our strategic nuclear forces outside Europe is the POLARIS fleet. The President stated at Ottawa that the U.S. would commit certain of these submarines to NATO. At Athens, we announced our commitment of the five fully operational ships.

This protected, long endurance, controllable force is a vital and unique element of NATO's retaliatory capacity. It must be used so as to make a maximum contribution to the over-all NATO nuclear response which we regard as indivisible. Their use, therefore, will not be limited to the support of any single theater or major commander.

*Where?* The strategic capabilities I have described have important political consequences. The Alliance continues to possess much of the diplomatic

freedom that it has enjoyed in the past. We can confidently reject the missile threats that Mr. Khrushchev so imprudently brandishes. If the Soviets or their satellites impinge on our interests, we can resist with considerable confidence that our antagonists will not wish to escalate the conflict. (Opposed).

As the President has indicated on a number of occasions, the United States is prepared to respond immediately with nuclear weapons to the use of nuclear weapons against one or more members of the Alliance. The United States is also prepared to counter with nuclear weapons any Soviet conventional attack so strong that it cannot be dealt

with by conventional means. But let us be quite clear what we are saying and what we would have to face. .... There is the possibility almost certain prospect that, despite our nuclear strength and our ability to destroy the Soviet Union, we accept our share of this responsibility within the Alliance.

And we believe that the combination of our nuclear strength and a strategy of controlled response gives us some hope of minimizing damage in the event that we have to fulfill our pledge. But I would be less than candid if I pretended to you that the United States regards this as a desirable prospect or believes that the Alliance should depend solely on our nuclear power to deter the Soviet Union from actions not involving a massive commitment of Soviet force.

Surely an Alliance with the wealth, talent, and experience that we possess can find a better way than this to meet our common threat.

Why nuclear? (Doesn't want).

\* Soviet Target system, all of us will suffer deeply in the event of major nuclear war (especially Europe...?)

We shall continue to maintain powerful nuclear forces for  
the Alliance as a whole. But, in our view, the threat of general  
war should constitute only one of several weapons in our arsenal  
and one to be used with prudence. On this question I can see no  
valid reason for a fundamental difference of view on the two sides  
of the Atlantic.

With the Alliance possessing the strength and the strategy  
I have described, it is most unlikely that the Soviet Union will  
launch a nuclear attack on NATO. But there are other forms of  
aggression. For the kinds of conflicts most likely to arise in the  
NATO area, non-nuclear capabilities appear to be clearly what the  
populations of the NATO countries and to meet our treaty obligations,  
we have put in hand a series of measures to strengthen our non-  
nuclear power. We have added \$10 billion for this purpose to the  
previously planned level of expenditures for fiscal years 1962 and  
1963. To take the immediate steps which Berlin obliged, and to  
tide us over while new permanent strength was being created, we  
called up 158,000 reservists. We will be releasing them this  
summer, but only because in the meantime we have built up on an  
enduring basis more added strength than the call-up temporarily  
gave us. The number of U.S. combat-ready divisions has been  
increased from 11 to 16. Stockpiled in Europe now are full sets of

equipment for two additional divisions; the men of these divisions can be rapidly moved to Europe by air.

We expect that our allies will also undertake to strengthen their non-nuclear forces, and to improve the quality and staying power of these forces. These achievements will fill in the major gap in our deterrent strength. With improvements in Alliance ground force strength and staying power, improved non-nuclear air capabilities, and better equipped and trained reserve forces, the Soviet Union can be assured that no gap exists in the NATO defense of this vital region, and that no aggression, small or large, can succeed.

I have described very briefly the United States' views on the role of nuclear forces in the strategy of the Alliance. I have pointed out that the Alliance necessarily depends, for the deterrence of general nuclear war, on the powerful and well protected nuclear forces of the United States, which are necessarily committed to respond to enemy nuclear strikes wherever they may be made. At the same time, I have indicated the need for substantial non-nuclear forces to deal with situations where a nuclear response may be

*Recognition of our real challenges can only  
inappropriate or simply not believable. Lead to*

I want to remind you also that the security provided by military strength is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the achievement of our foreign policy goals. Military security provides a base

on which we can build Free World strength through the economic advances and political reforms which are the object of the President's programs like the Alliance for Progress and the Trade Expansion legislation.

A distinguished European visited the United States last month as a guest of the President. Andre Malraux, ~~a~~ French Minister of State for Cultural Affairs, is an eminent novelist and critic, whose works have been translated into 18 languages. He <sup>and</sup> led an archaeological expedition to Cambodia, fought in the Spanish Civil War and the French Resistance Movement, and is, as the President said, "at the same time a great creative figure in his own right." Malraux paid a moving tribute to our nation when he said: "The only nation that has waged war but not worshipped it, that has won the greatest power in the world but not sought it, that has wrought the greatest weapon of death but has not wished to wield it . . . May it inspire men with dreams worthy of its action."

The community of learning to which you have been admitted carries with it great privileges. It also carries great responsibilities. And perhaps the greatest of these is to help insure the wise use of our national power. Let me paraphrase Malraux: May your dreams be worthy of action and your actions be shaped by your dreams.

How about meeting; ~~complexly~~, <sup>multitudinously</sup>, ~~unfamiliar~~<sup>17</sup> of intellectual problems confronting us, need for scholars & educated men to contribute to solution, and to furthering general understanding